

**Wellesley Public Schools
School Committee Meeting
September 9, 2020
Remote Online Meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm. Those present included Chair Linda Chow, Vice Chair Melissa Martin, Secretary Catherine Mirick, members Sharon Gray and Jim Roberti; Superintendent David Lussier, Assistant Superintendent Joan Dabrowski and Cynthia Mahr; Director of Human Resources Gayle McCracken, Director of Student Services Sarah Orlov, Department Head of Nursing Linda Corridan, and Student Advisory representative Rachel White.

Ms. Chow announced that the meeting is being held remotely and recorded by local media and broadcast live by Wellesley Media.

PUBLIC COMMENT There were no callers.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Chow reported that the Playing Field Task Force and the NRC have been moving forward with the installation of a modest precast building that will house bathrooms for the fields. This project is now in the design phase and the NRC is soliciting feedback from the community. They hope to request funding at the fall Special Town Meeting. A joint meeting with the NRC to discuss bathrooms for the High School stadium will be scheduled in the near future.

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes: August 6, 2020 Open Session

Ms. Chow entertained a motion to approve the August 6, 2020 Open Session minutes as presented.

MOVED: Ms. Gray; SECONDED: Mr. Roberti; ROLL CALL: Ms. Gray – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Roberti – Yes; Ms. Chow – abstained

MOTION CARRIED 4 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstention.

SCHOOL REOPENING PLANNING UPDATE

Fall Sports

The Committee was joined by WHS Principal Jamie Chisum and Athletic Director John Brown who provided an overview of the proposed WPS Athletic Plan for Fall 2020 which is based on MIAA and DESE guidance.

Committee members asked questions regarding logistics, timing, use of locker rooms, and messaging to the community. There was concern that Middle School sports will not be available in the fall, however, due to timing and staff bandwidth, this is not possible.

After a discussion, Ms. Chow entertained a motion to approve the start of the Fall 1 season for High School athletes on September 21, 2020.

MOVED: Mr. Roberti; SECONDED: Ms. Mirick; ROLL CALL: Ms. Gray – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Roberti – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Reopening Plans for Staff and Families

Dr. Lussier announced that staff returned to school last week, with the option of coming in person or remotely. This week, all staff returned to their buildings in person. Health and safety training, as well as building-specific training, has been ongoing.

Dr. Lussier reviewed the reopening planning process and timeline. He noted that tents are being installed on school properties. These tents will be used for outdoor learning, lunch and mask breaks as appropriate. He reviewed how schedules and assignments will be provided at each level and for the Remote Learning School.

The District is working hard to prioritize the full time, in person return of the youngest learners as well as high needs students. Dr. Lussier will continue to keep the community informed on this progress.

Ms. Mahr provided an overview of the Wellesley Community Children's Center after-school program and its structure for the fall.

Ms. Mahr then reviewed the enrollment summary, both projection to actual, year to year, and variances by level.

HR Director Gayle McCracken provided an update on staffing for both the hybrid and RLS models. Work continues to fill open positions across both environments.

Ms. Dabrowski provided an overview of what a 'home' school day for hybrid students will look like at each level. Committee members asked questions regarding ongoing work by staff over the past week, the high school learning platform, and mentioned the importance of continued communication with parents.

Dr. Lussier addressed the concern with aligning cohorts for siblings at different levels. He indicated that staff is trying to accommodate requests where possible, however, due to the complexity of schedules at each level, it may not be possible to accommodate siblings across levels.

The Committee thanked Dr. Lussier and his team for all the work that has been done and continues to be done in navigating such complex issues.

Ms. Chow reported there was discussion at the last Board of Selectmen meeting about the WPS supplemental budget request and whether it should be presented to Special Town Meeting or wait until the spring Town Meeting so there is a better understanding of what the incremental costs are and whether CARES Act funds might be utilized to cover some of the costs.

Viral Testing Pilot Program Update

Dr. Lussier provided an update on the viral testing program, noting that a Request for Proposals was issued on August 28th, with the deadline for responses on September 8th.

The responses will be reviewed on Wednesday and he hopes to select a vendor quickly in order to test students and staff before the start of in-person learning on October 1st.

HHU UPDATE

Hunnewell

Ms. Gray announced that the Planning Board public hearing on the Hunnewell Project opened last night and included a review of the PSI process. The hearing was continued to October 5th. It was also noted that Mr. Roberti, who is a member of the Planning Board, has recused himself from the process.

Hardy/Upham

Ms. Chow removed herself from the meeting at 8:33 pm and returned at 9:01 pm.

Ms. Gray reviewed the schedule for upcoming meetings including September 10 and 11th to review selection criteria for the Hardy/Upham Project; a community forum on September 17th; and an anticipated SBC vote on the preferred option slated for September 24th.

Ms. Gray asked the Committee if they believed the additional options that were raised recently at the SBC meeting and discussed at the last School Committee meeting, should be further developed, noting that the options include the need for swing space. Given that swing space is under the Committee's purview, she solicited the Committee's feedback on the use of swing space for the Hardy/Upham project.

The Committee discussed the additional options that were recently presented, noting that the SBC had previously narrowed down the project to three options, with two not requiring swing space and the additional delays and costs that will result with swing space. The Committee also discussed its desire to create as few transitions as possible for students.

It was the consensus of the Committee that the recently presented options that include swing space do not appear to be in the best interest of the community from both an educational and cost perspective, and will result in unnecessary delays to the project.

ADJOURNMENT

At approximately 9:05 pm, Ms. Mirick entertained a motion to adjourn.

MOVED: Ms. Martin; **SECONDED:** Mr. Roberti; **ROLL CALL:** Ms. Mirick – Yes; Ms. Gray – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes.; Mr. Roberti - Yes

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Mirick
Secretary

Documents and Exhibits Used:

Fall 1 Athletics 9/8/20 Memo and Presentation

Athletics Fall Vision Statement

SC Enrollment Update September 2020

Swing Space – HU Slides